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Lord Keynes's Victory

THE BRETTON WOODS monetary and financial conference is just winding up its affairs as these lines go to press. Since the subject matter with which this conference has dealt is one to puzzle even the elect, it may serve some purpose briefly to explain what the delegates have been up to. Their work has been principally concerned with the creation of two new international organizations. One of these, generally called the Bank for Reconstruction and Development, although in its final form the word *bank* will probably be changed, represents a simple concept. The purpose of this agency will be to make certain that loans are available—and preferably private capital loans—to provide for the rebuilding of devastated nations. It also will provide capital for the development of backward areas not devastated by war. A small fraction of the bank's capital would be available for making direct loans, should that prove necessary; the balance would serve as a guarantee fund for private loans.

Everyone who has given the subject much consideration is likely to agree that some such institution will be necessary after the war. The task of reconstruction will be far beyond the scope of private capital alone, and it will involve risks and uncertainties about which private investors would find it very difficult to keep informed. Indeed, after the experience of our European loans during the 20's, it is doubtful whether Americans would find new loans to Europe attractive.

The real controversy over the actions of the monetary and financial conference has arisen in connection with the international monetary fund "to stabilize currencies." This consists of a sort of credit pool, to which each of the participating nations would contribute roughly in accordance with its means, and over which control would be exercised in proportion to each nation's contribution. The details of how this fund would operate seem relatively unimportant; the whole controversy relates to the basic theory under which the fund has been set up. Here is a complete reversal of all capitalist tradition with regard to the *value* of national currencies. In the past this value has largely been determined by what *other* nations thought of any given nation's stability and economic soundness. Thus a seriously unbalanced budget, carried over a period of years, would tend to depress a nation's currency and to increase the interest rates on its national debt; it would also tend to cause a flight of that nation's capital, seeking safer places for investment. Thus, automatically, the world enforced a certain discipline upon government spending and economic expansion.

Lord Keynes, who is really the father of the stabilization fund, has long differed with the traditional capitalist conception of money and international finance. Some time prior to the present conference, he addressed the British House of Lords on the plans which had been prepared for the conference. He found these plans not quite as satisfactory as his own original proposal, but was prepared to accept them as generally good. In this speech he made the following statements: "We are determined that in future the external value of Sterling shall conform to its internal value as set by our own domestic policies, and not the other way round. Secondly, we intend to retain control of our domestic rate of interest, so that we can keep it as low as suits our own purposes, without interference from the ebb and flow of international capital movements or flights of hot money. Thirdly, whilst we intend to prevent inflation at home, we will not accept deflation at the dictates of influences from outside. In other words, we abjure the instruments of bank rate and credit contraction, operating through the increase of unemployment, as a means of forcing our domestic economy into line with external factors." Anyone at all familiar with Lord Keynes's economic thinking will recognize these statements as characteristic. His whole effort is to try to expand the operations of national economies in order to

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prevent the recurrence of depressions. Of course this is viewed as utterly unsound by anyone who even vaguely adheres to the tenets of classical economics.

Certainly there is danger that such a new economic order will prove inflationary. And because of this danger the critics of what has been done at Bretton Woods should by no means be dismissed as mere old fogies. The statement that the proposed fund would serve rather as a destabilizing than a stabilizing influence is perhaps not too far wide of the mark. Of course the whole scheme sets rigid restrictions on transfers of private capital from one country to another in order to prevent flights of this sort, which have been so characteristic of the last fifteen years. And this in itself will earn the plan the opposition of those who possess or control large amounts of capital. It would be altogether unjust and foolish, however, to brand this opposition as being merely reaction.

In a sense the stabilization fund represents the application on a world-wide scale of many of the economic inventions of nazi Germany. As we pointed out several years ago, it may be that the world is tending inevitably in this direction, with more and more restrictions placed upon the free play of economic forces, and that ideologically the best we can hope for is a set-up which will avoid the concomitant barbarism of historical fascism. Of course the nations represented at Bretton Woods may refuse to accept the plans worked out there, in which case a somewhat more conservative solution of the currency problem would still be possible. But if the decisions of the conference are put into effect, we shall face a future of extreme uncertainty until we discover by the hard method of experience how Lord Keynes's ideas work out in practice.

Echoes

AS THE Russian armies sweep on toward East Prussia and the German-occupied areas of Poland, the name Brest-Litovsk recurs in the news, and under circumstances which inevitably have a certain poignancy. This is the town where a defeated and disintegrating Russia was forced to sue for peace from the Central Powers a little over a quarter of a century ago. Lenin and Trotsky knew that they must make peace. They knew that the terms of that peace would be difficult for Russian pride to accept, but whatever the terms, they would have to accept them. It was not merely that a failure to make peace would have destroyed their revolution. Such a failure inevitably would have led to the disappearance of Russia as a first class power, and none of the material development of the last twenty years would have been possible. Their decision then, which was properly viewed with dismay by the Western Powers, made possible the victorious progress of Russian arms today, and history has come a full circle—something which rarely happens on this planet.

A Flying Visit

GENERAL DE GAULLE'S American trip seems to have eased the tension between the United States and his provisional French government. We have not retreated from our basic position, which has been to refuse to grant a monopoly of power to the Committee of National Liberation. It should be clearly understood that we never refused to cooperate in military and practical matters with this committee, but that we did refuse to take any step which would deprive us of the power of refusing, if ever such a refusal might prove necessary. It seems clear enough that the basis for our insistence upon this policy was a certain distrust of General de Gaulle and his bent of mind. Had President Roosevelt been convinced that the Committee of National Liberation really intended to let the choice of a French postwar government remain with the French people, honestly and unequivocally, our attitude would have been very different. The General's visit to Washington produced what looked like real concessions on our part. But it did not produce the maximum for which the General and his followers may have hoped. They have not been granted a monopoly. And that it is wise not to grant them a monopoly is once more indicated by an AP dispatch from Algiers: "The French Committee of National Liberation published and thereby legally adopted a press law establishing a single French agency with exclusive rights to distribute all French and foreign news within France. The exclusive position of the agency will ban any other French agency as well as foreign organizations. This agency alone will be permitted to negotiate with foreign agenices for news exchange agreements." (July 17.)

The Jews and the "Protestant"

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, on the last page of its bulletin for July, 1944, summarizes statements by four of the principal American Jewish "protective" organizations, representing a wide cross-section of Jewish opinion, concerning Kenneth Leslie's magazine, *The Protestant,* and its affiliated Textbook Commission, both of which have proved viciously anti-Catholic. The first paragraph of this summary is as follows:

> The four leading Jewish national civic protective agencies have issued statements advising against the support by Jews of *The Protestant,* edited by Kenneth Leslie, and its affiliated Textbook Commission. The American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the Jewish Labor Committee, for varying reasons, all agree that it is inadvisable to foster these activities of Mr. Leslie.

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Obscurantism

THEY used to have their meetings in a café in Lyons, in a café in Brussels, outdoors under the trees in the park of a school near Paris, in a temperance restaurant—because it was cheap—in Neuchatel, with the quai outside the window and the lake beyond and a man fishing from a rowboat on the quiet waters of the lake. Once, they met at Robinson where there are tables up in the trees and you eat your lunch sitting up in the trees on benches that are built in the branches. At these meetings there were a great many more professors than there should have been but that was the French system. The French intellectuals overwhelmingly were in the teaching profession. The teaching profession led to anything on condition that you got out of it—to politics, to writing, to art. But the mark of the Ecole Normale remained, and, at these meetings, if you asked who was someone the answer first would be that he was so and so of the thesis on Saint Augustin, or that he was so and so of the thesis on the pre-Christian sarcophagous, and then, secondarily, that he was an independent socialist or that he was the theoretician for the Christian trades unionists. At these meetings there were French and Belgians, German exiles, Italian and Spanish exiles; there were lawyers, musicians, doctors, scientists, young men who worked for a living in stores, in garages, in repair shops, in factories. The meetings were held to plan a new society for France, a new society for Europe, a peace in justice for France and for all nations of Europe. That was before the war. That was when people hoped and planned before the war.

The last hopes, the last plans.

It was as if after the other war, the "great" war, the hopes and plans of the nineteenth century had reappeared again for a moment, surviving, or appearing to survive the war which—in fact—had ruined them. It is not a question of the good hopes and the good plans; it is astonishingly, simply, that there were any hopes or any plans. It is amazing that the Germans and the Italians made the plans they did, hoping in such ideas as nationalism or race; it is astonishing that a socialism, which had failed, projected—had still the vitality to project—Lenin and Trotzky into their hopes and plans; it is unspeakably touching to think of the French personalist groups between the two wars hoping and planning to infuse the society of their times, immediately, and in time to prevent immediate disaster, with the Christian idea—which the world already for two thousand years had been refusing to accept.

In 1914 it had all ended up in a war and in 1939 it all ended up in another war. But between the two wars there was this curious spectacle of people all over Europe placing their hope in plans, in theories, in political and social doctrines which already had failed.

For a man living now to feel in his heart all the disappointment which is in the world as a reality, it would be necessary for him to have lived the lives of his father and of his grandfather and of his great grandfather. We have our own disappointments, our own lost hopes. The greater disappointment, the impersonal disappointment is there, however, outside us, whether we are sensitive to it or not. The world looked bright when Napoleon fell, when Greece was freed, when there was a new Italy. And so, if we could remember and share the hopes of the last hundred years we would have something to hold to, we would believe that nations must be free and, of course, we still say this and still believe this, only we now know that they must be free in a certain way, in certain essentials, but not free to act against other nations and so the belief is no longer anything simple and clear and obvious. There is no longer the romanticism of national freedom. The world looked bright to a young man traveling in Germany in 1890 when for the first time he read Dostoievsky in a German translation and knew that the poor and the oppressed were his brothers and then, with his heart awakened, when he turned to socialism. It was, of course, only the generosity in socialism that counted, and the spirit of the militants, but this spirit and this generosity moved toward justice, and it was impossible in the days of Péguy and of Jaurès—and of Debs too—not to know that there was a political, a social and a spiritual force in which men could believe. The war of 1914 killed socialism as it killed nationalism.

Democracy? No, it did not die. But it is not the same sort of thing as socialism or nationalism. It does not offer the same sort of promises; it does not present the same hopes. Democracy is the belief that there is no panacea, no immediate solution, no systematic solution, no organization, no codification, that will settle everything. Democracy is the belief that we have to keep on trying, that we shall have to keep on trying indefinitely.

When this war is over, with every other hope gone, there will still be the hope in democracy, but this will be another kind of hope. It will be the only hope left. Democracy is what we shall have left after everything else has gone. It is what men have always had whenever they were freed from one tyranny or another, or whenever they lost the hopes which carried them, elated, toward utopias. It is the human condition, when restraint or illusion is removed. So that when this war is ended men everywhere will be left lonely, saddened, disillusioned, alone with democracy.

Perhaps the only thing to do is to wash the feet of the poor.

C. G. PAULDING.

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London Commentary

Principally doodlebugs

J. L. Benvenisti

THESE NOTES are written to the accompaniment of the intermittent snoring of the doodlebugs. You will by now have read all about these gentlemen. Just at the moment they are a somewhat unpleasant reality and (let Hitler get any satisfaction out of this that he can) have rather disorganized me over the past days. To a person like myself the ordinary short air raid that Hitler has been giving us in South England from time to time is no very great matter. I go down into the shelter, stuff my ears with wax and read the *Financial News* (I do not know why the *Financial News* always has a soothing effect on me during air raids, but it has) and when the raid is over, I go back to bed. But these things come snoring in night and day ("snoring" is a pretty exact description of the sound they make) and waiting for that extremely unpleasant moment when the snoring stops and when you know that the crash of the explosion will occur in a few seconds, though you do not quite know whether it will or will not take place in your back garden—or possibly under your nose—is not greatly conducive to successful literary creation. Unpleasant as they are, however, the military significance of their confounded machines is exactly *nil,* and people here are carrying on with their jobs exactly as before. I have, however, seen no special mention of one class of workers, who, in my opinion, have particularly deserved our gratitude and admiration. They are the bus drivers, and the "clippies" or conductresses. Just at present the streets are not exactly safe places. One of these confounded devices may come down at any time, but it is almost impossible to hear their approach above the noise of the bus. We all of us have to use buses from time to time, of course, but these people are at it the whole time. Yet there is no curtailment of the services.

All this is very different from the kind of picture which Dr. Goebbels has been drawing about us. We are, I gather from him, in a state of panic, or, alternatively solacing ourselves with drunken orgies. Now I will make Dr. Goebbels a sporting offer. I will stage any amount of drunken orgies for his benefit if he will only supply the drink. I would like to preserve a certain modicum of the decency and dignity due to my standing, but even that I will sacrifice if he will lead me to half a dozen bottles of decent whiskey. However, I will not pull the good doctor's leg any more, because there has been rather too much of that lately.

There is a tendency to treat Goebbels as a particularly clumsy liar, and that is very unjust. Dr. Goebbels is a very skilful liar. As a liar he knows his business perfectly, and those who deny this prove themselves to be very considerably the doctor's inferiors in general psychological insight. For instance, everybody is warning the Germans just now about the boomerang effect of their propaganda about these doodlebugs. We are told of the frightful disillusionment that will take place when the Germans find out that all these stories about London being in panic are bunk. I do not agree. People seem to have very short memories.

I can think of half a dozen utterances by German leaders in the past which were quite as fantastic, and which now must be seen to have been quite as demonstrably untrue. Actually the same identical lie was told four years ago during the big Blitz. Germans were told then that London was burning and in panic, and Germans must surely know by now that nothing of the kind occurred. But it has made no difference worth speaking of. It seems odd that our journalists should fail to notice this because, in writing as they do, they are belittling the importance of their own function. The thing that makes it impossible in Britain or America for a public man to go on making one statement after another that proves utterly false, and still to get away with it, is the existence of free criticism, and above all the existence of a free press, and what makes this possible is precisely the absence of these things. If men have no chance to express their thoughts they very soon cease to think. The spoken and written word is much more than a vehicle of thought, it is to a large extent its creator, and if speech and writing are forbidden, the very roots of reasoning and memory are atrophied. That is why Germans are apparently able to reconcile the propositions that London was destroyed four years ago and that it still exists, and why the memory of its present alleged destruction by doodlebugs will be largely wiped from their minds when it becomes inconvenient for the German authorities to have them remember it.

For me, these doodlebugs will always be associated with one particularly vivid experience. I

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happen to be under contract to finish a book, and you can't write books if you don't get your sleep. I am happy to say that I have now made arrangements to do this very thing (my method is a military secret) but after the first two nights of the attack that method had not yet been perfected. I was in a pretty bad way, and I saw quite clearly that if I did not get a couple of quiet nights somewhere I should be unable to go on earning my living. One day I shall write the story of my subsequent adventures. I will call it "A Journalist in Search of Sleep." I will tell how carrying blankets, pyjamas, a few notes and writing materials, I set out upon the road, and how my good angel guided me to a deep shelter out in a chalk cliff some miles away where I got a solid seven hours.

But my good angel had not finished with me, for coming out of the shelter in the morning I saw a large house through the morning mists which, on closer inspection, turned out to be a hotel. I went there to ask for breakfast, to find that the proprietor was a Frenchman who for twenty-eight years had been chef at the Carlton Hotel. On learning that I was a poor wandering journalist (I happened to have one of my COMMONWEAL articles on me to establish my bona fides), they took me in and treated me like a prince. What impressed me about these people, however, was not only their kindness to me but a special and typically French sort of goodness that radiated from the proprietor. He was, as I have said, by profession a chef and he took a wholly disinterested delight in seeing that his guests were well fed, which, to my mind, can only be explained by a real and burning love of his fellow men.

Not only that, but much of the food he served was grown by himself, and for hours I could see him pottering about in his vegetable garden, cultivating the herbs and plants that would realize their final end in one of his excellent soups. That was the purpose of nature—to feed man—and he was an ecstatic minister of the process. He is the kind of man I could visualize shedding tears of beatitude over a well grown lettuce in an ecstasy of vicarious gustation, and there was about all his coming and going a selfless devotion which must surely rank high among the virtues.

If ever (which Heaven forbid) I should be driven to earn my living by illustrating Scripture texts, and were called upon to illustrate the words, "Blessed are the pure of heart," I would do a picture of that man busying himself with his garden and his stew pans. I think there is a quality of goodness here which the French have more than any other nation.

★

An excellently good speech has just been made over here on the subject of anti-Semitism by Bishop Matthew. His Lordship was speaking at the annual meeting of the Council of Christians and Jews, and made one point which I thought particularly telling. Beware of the anti-Semite, he said, who excepts from his general condemnation the good Jews he has known. "He must have a good Jew to justify himself before his own conscience." I respectfully suggest that His Lordship might have said with almost equal force, "Beware of the crypto-anti-Semite who says that he has nothing personal against Jews, but that we must admit the existence of a Jewish problem." Such a man is also rationalizing and justifying an instinctive propensity which in his secret heart he knows to be indefensible. I have something to say concerning a certain type of Catholic who is addicted to this kind of thing, and the more I reflect on him, the more he puzzles me, for it seems to me that when he talks about the existence of a Jewish problem, he is really referring to something that should be called by an entirely different name.

Let me explain for a moment. It is untrue that Jews have, as a race, any specially wicked or anti-social kind of propensity. It is not untrue that some sort of case against them might be built up on these lines. It would be possible to point to a certain kind of Jew who is rather given to sharp business practices; it would be possible to point to the "immoral film" (which I am getting genuinely anxious to see) and blame it on the high proportion of Jews in the industry. If by this means you can convince yourself that the Jew is an especially sinister or dangerous person, it is perfectly reasonable, nay it is almost charitable, to talk of a Jewish problem. But the kind of man I have in mind often does not argue this way at all. He talks something like this. He says: "There is an instinctive antagonism between Jew and Gentile which is just one of the facts of life. Nobody is to blame for it, but it is there and you have got to take account of it." Now it is quite obvious that Jews have no instinctive dislike of Gentiles, though they do sometimes have distrust of them, and when people talk like this, they simply mean that Gentiles very often dislike Jews—which is, unfortunately, true enough. But if so, is it not very odd that they should refer to this undoubted fact as the Jewish Problem? It is not the Jewish problem but the problem of Gentile dislike of the Jew. It is the Gentile who does the injustice—even if he cannot help himself. It is the Jew who suffers it. Why this faulty terminology? Surely it would be very strange if people talked about the problem of the widow and the orphan when what they really had in mind was the fact that fraudulent trustees sometimes embezzled their money. A Sunday school teacher who referred to the story of Cain as "The Problem of Abel" would surely be considered to err on the side of excessive moral relativism, and even a theatrical producer who put

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on Macbeth under the title of the "Problem of Banquo" might leave his audience with a feeling that he had somehow failed to find the *mot juste*.

True Banquo was a bit of a problem for Macbeth, as was Abel to Cain, but this is hardly the aspect of the matter that immediately leaps to our minds. For the fact is that nobody has a wild and unreasoning hatred of Abel or Banquo, and therefore nobody in such matters as these is under any temptation to turn intellectual somersaults to disguise—or excuse—their own feelings. But they do hate Jews, and that is why in the case of Jews they behave after this fashion. It is really very simple.

★

I do hope that certain over-zealous individuals are not going to get us all into trouble over Russia. The relation of the Catholic Church to Russia is a matter that need not be enlarged on here. Except, of course, to point out (though this hardly needs pointing out) that the attitude of the Vatican is not such as would endanger, in this or any other country, the good relations between Catholics and their non-Catholic fellow citizens. Unfortunately there are those who are *plus royaliste que le Roi* and people over here are beginning to feel that a very vocal Catholic minority is working against what the ordinary Englishman believes to be the national interest. There is no question whatever that the British look upon a firm understanding with Russia as the keystone of post-war foreign policy, and when I say the British I mean not merely the Government, who most certainly do hold this view, but the ordinary man in the street. I think Walter Lippmann was right when he said that ordinary people do have a sort of instinctive grasp of what is and what is not a purposive and intelligent foreign policy, and the ordinary people of Britain realize that a firm alliance with Russia is the only thing which will truly safeguard us against another German outbreak in twenty years' time.

Naturally such an attitude is often accompanied by a tendency to look upon Russia as a sort of earthly paradise. But there is a great deal less of this than is generally supposed. In the main I find that I can talk about the shortcomings of Russia quite openly and get a sympathetic hearing, and fewer and fewer people seem to have any illusions about the absence in that country of free speech and open justice; indeed members of the Government allude publicly to the suspicious nature of Russian diplomacy and to the lack of frank and open-handed dealings. The effect of this, however, is not to make the British more sympathetic to anti-Russian propaganda. If anything the effect is the opposite. The attitude seems to be: "The Russians are difficult enough customers on their own account without your coming along and complicating matters," and they are thus liable to express themselves rather strongly to this effect.

Now the hostility to Russia of certain Catholic publicists is obvious. It is no use for these people to try and hide that hostility behind formal tributes to the valor of the Russian armies, the patriotism of the Russian people and so on. If one week you tell your readers that the Russian transport system is about to break down, and the next week you imply that Russia will in all probability make a separate peace with Germany, and if you hardly let a single week go past without belittling or abusing something connected with Russia's effort of carrying on the war and running the country, then it is no good saying that you merely dislike communism or Marxist materialism or whatnot, you are an enemy of the thing that today is Russia, and nobody is going to be fooled by anything you say to the contrary.

Among the attacks which publicists of this kind seem to favor there is one which seems to me particularly silly and, I would even say, dishonest. It consists in drawing attention to the fact, or rather the alleged fact, that both Russia and Germany are totalitarian countries. This is really nothing more than playing with words. It is, of course, true that both countries are autocratically ruled, and, in so far as autocratic rule is part of the essential conception of totalitarianism, it is true that both Germany and Russia are totalitarian countries. But actually when we speak of the fascist countries as totalitarian, we mean something quite different. We mean that the individual has no significance and no existence apart from the State. This is not only a matter of fact in Germany and until recently in Italy. It is (and this is even more important) a matter of theory. It was part of the formally propagated theory of both those states. The Russian theory, however, is the precise opposite; it is that the ultimate destiny of the State is to wither away. This may be a ridiculous idea and you are perfectly entitled to laugh at it, or even to condemn it, but if you admit that it exists (and if you laugh at it or condemn it you imply its existence as an idea), then you have to admit that the Russian conception is the diametrical opposite of the German, and this, of course, is true and shows itself in all kinds of ways. However undesirable Russia's methods may be, her aim is beyond any shadow of doubt the exaltation of human personality. Indeed the most intelligent form of attack that can be made against her is that she over-exalts human personality. It is the essence of "Godless communism" that man is sufficient to himself and can achieve all things necessary out of his own resources. That is a theory which the Christian not only may but must attack. But it is surely preposterous for him to do it on the grounds that Russia has no respect for human personality.

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Another thing which badly needs correcting in our current estimates of Russia is the old theory that socialism simply means handing everything over to Government servants. This was one of Gilbert Chesterton's great arguments. Chesterton was very fond of pointing out—and indeed it is true enough—that there is very little difference between being run by a vast commercial trust and being run by a vast government department. Now, whatever may be her shortcomings this last does not seem to be true of Russia. It is indeed much more true of contemporary Britain, where the danger of everybody being run by a government department is very real. But the danger of that in Russia seems relatively slight. The individual citizen in Russia, from what I can gather, stands a very good chance of being sent to the tin mines, the salt mines, or of being shot, hanged, or in general bumped off without much pretence of trial. But he does seem to have a great deal more real responsibility than anybody in the democracies. He really does seems to have a say in how his workshop is to be run. He really has got a certain domain in which in conjunction with his fellow workers he is in the position of a boss. There really does seem to be in Russia a degree of industrial self-government and also of local autonomy which exceeds anything of the kind which we have in the West.

This is something of a paradox, but I believe the whole thing is really not so preposterous as it seems. Responsibility implies responsibility for failure, and the Russian's exceedingly high chances of getting himself liquidated are a kind of tribute to the freedom of action with which he is supposed to be endowed. You may personally prefer less freedom and a shade less liquidation (I am sure that I do), but the two things are in a sense complementary to one another, and it is only fair to recognize this fact.

Is a Solution Possible in Spain?

Chances for a democratic recovery

Alfredo Mendizabal

SINCE the Franco régime and the Falange are quite without support because they are illegitimate and tyrannical (according to impartial information transmitted from Lisbon, Franco can count on only 15 percent of the people as partisans of his régime, and they are the ones who depend on it for their livelihood); since the restoration of the monarchy would not resolve in any fashion the most serious problems to be faced but would provoke as a reaction an uprising by the extreme Left, the very thing the monarchists have been seeking to avoid through inadequate means, there is for Spain only one feasible way which is in accord both with its own interests and those of Western democracy: the republic. What kind of republic would be possible? ask those who seek at all times to have things work out along the lines of their own interests. The reply to that captious question would be unnecessary in the light of a correct conception of the republic, since it is by definition the business of everyone. In a régime with liberty no one is left out, everyone takes part who accepts the fair play of democratic institutions; in a republican régime each party enjoys the influence which legitimately corresponds to its respective weight in the opinion of the country. Not a new *coup d'état* nor diplomatic intrigue but the decisions of the majority of the people expressed in free elections must determine the ultimate destiny of Spain.

When we say that the republic must be restored in Spain, we do not mean that we must return to this or that government of the past, to this or that combination of parties which in turn have enjoyed popular favor. We understand the republic as a legal régime of political liberty; and as such it cannot be a monopoly either of the Left or of the Right. If it is thus understood by the men who in the near future will have to assume the responsibility of directing the first steps of the democratic régime, if it is so recognized by those who, carried away by a passionate extremism, placed obstacles in the way of the normal development of the second Spanish republic, the third republic will be able to free itself from demagogy and the revolutionary and reactionary violence which often turned it from its original course. The lesson of the Civil War was too severe for its victims who are still alive to forget. If victory puffed up and blinded Franco and his followers, defeat opened the eyes of many republicans. In Spanish prisons and in exile scattered throughout the world, and many of them in the free lands of America, they have been able to reflect and to recast their views; and the language of no few of them is today quite different from what it was a few years ago. There

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remain, unfortunately, certain diehards, isolated or in groups, for whom enough Spanish blood has not even yet been shed and who wish to perpetuate the round of extermination. But the most important of the exiles and those with the greatest sense of responsibility (the only ones who can express their ideas) think rather of justice than of vengeance, of the reconstruction of Spain rather than of continuing the work of her destruction. The recent establishment in Mexico of the "Junta Española de Liberacion" is a decisive fact, the drawing together in its first phase, the negative or passive phase, of the most important nuclei of Spanish emigration in the effort to unite them on a positive policy toward the future reconstruction of a democratic Spain.

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The representatives of the different republican parties (the republican Left, Union Republicans and the republican groups of Catalonia) and of the Socialist Party signed in Mexico on last November 20 a "Pact of Unity" from which developed at the end of December the establishment of the "Junta Española de Liberacion," whose president Señor Martínez Barriol, held the post of chairman in the last republican parliament, and whose general secretary is the socialist leader, Señor Prieto. The manifesto which expresses the basic principles of the new organization vindicates "the right of the Spaniards to recover their free institutions," affirms its "respect for the fundamental principles of the republican constitution" and for those principles which inform the autonomous statutes of Catalonia and the Basque country. But it continues: "This does not mean that such principles are beyond modification or bar the way to political, economic and social changes which the progress of our country demands, but only that their revision and modification is a task which is incumbent upon all Spaniards and can be carried out in a legitimate fashion only when a new constitutional period begins." And it further insists that "Fidelity to the principles of 1931 until they are legally supplanted or modified does not imply ignorance or forgetfulness of all the things which have taken place since then, but these must be borne in mind chiefly for their experience value and as a lesson so that the same errors will not be repeated and even less that policies which failed be tried anew in a more intense form." "Without stubbornly perpetuating the brittle and ephemeral creations of the parties which at times corresponded more closely to theoretical tendencies or to pretentions of hegemony than to the supreme interest of Spain. . . ." As can be seen there is no lack of self-criticism nor of a consistent policy of remedying past mistakes in the words of the men who led the republic and who now aspire to having it soon restored.

Proclaiming its solidarity with the democracies and invoking the Atlantic Charter, which recognizes "the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live," the manifesto expresses the hope of "seeing restored the sovereign rights and self-government of those, such as Spain, who were deprived of these rights by force." The Junta "appeals to the solidarity of all democratic forces and to the conscience of all peoples who are struggling for liberty and justice," but "does not ask for any material aid nor seek any assistance whatsoever"; it wants Spain to live "with both independence and dignity, without foreign interference or threatening tutelage, faithful to its spirit and to its genius." Let us note, in passing, the increasing tendency of Spaniards of all political persuasions to oppose foreign powers that try in one way or another to mix into the direction of what is Spain's own concern. That is one of the results of the Civil War and the intervention of Germany, Italy and Russia . . . and of the hypocritical farce of "non-intervention." From that time on Spaniards of every persuasion no longer confined their mistrust to their enemies but also included those who under the appearances of friendship either did nothing for them or tried to impose upon them a chafing protectorate. Each group demanded to be supported by its friends against the enemy, but finally was unable to stand having the friend who offered to be a helpful ally change into an overlord. Lack of sensibility in this matter has had a lot to do with the well-earned unpopularity of the Falange and of the Communist Party, with the Nationalists and the Republicans respectively.

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Even though the Junta in Mexico represents the majority of the republican parties in exile, it cannot be said that it includes all the organized groups of emigrés. In addition to dissident factions from the parties which are represented, there are three important organizations of widely divergent tendencies: the Basque Nationalist Party, the Communist Party and the Iberian Anarchist Federation, with its trade union subsidiary, the National Confederation of Labor (CNT)—it must be noted that the other powerful labor organization, the Union General de Trabajadores (UGT), recently joined the Junta. The collaboration of the communists and the anarchists was not wanted by the republican groups who signed the Pact of Unity. And this exclusion of the most violent factions was inspired by the attacks which these revolutionary nuclei had launched against the republic from within. Their interests and their activity and aspirations are not considered as consonant with the ideal of a republican democracy.

The Basque Nationalist Party, on the other hand, had been invited, at the same time as the

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Catalan parties, to cooperate with the other republican parties; and the support of the Basques (Catholics and republicans), traditionally moderate and peace-loving, would have served as a valuable balance wheel in the general policy of the Junta. But the leaders of the Basque Nationalists believed that it was not they who should have been invited but President Aguirre, who as head of the regional autonomous government could best represent the Basque people. Furthermore, the Basque claim that since their representatives did not vote for the Constitution of 1931 (at that time the Basque-Navarre minority had opposed, in company with the parties of the Right, those articles in the Constitution in which flared up the anti-Catholic sectarianism of the parties of the Left), they could *not accept as a basis for the pact "the most absolute loyalty to all* the principles of the aforesaid Constitution." Even though this sentiment enunciated by the Pact of Unity was somewhat modified by the Junta in its first manifesto to read "The most absolute respect for the *basic principles* of the Constitution," the Basque Nationalists did not agree to this formula (which a representative of the government of the autonomous region should actually have found it difficult to reject, since those sectarian articles were themselves contrary to the basic principles of religious liberty in the Constitution proper, and since the autonomous régime and its government derived their legal existence from the text of the Constitution). Again the Basque Nationalist Party, an expression of the most extreme claims to autonomy, refused collaboration with the other Spanish republicans if they would not concede beforehand the right of "self-determination" of the Basque people, under whose ambiguous objectives republicans and socialists perceived a separatist intention which as Spaniards they could not countenance, even less so in exile. The express mention of a compromise which would respect the principles which informed the autonomy statutes of Catalonia and the Basque country was accepted as a sufficient guarantee by the Catalan representatives but not by the Basques, who now consider as insufficient the régime of liberty which they themselves voted and the Republic approved. It is easily seen, then, how difficult and thorny a problem this is, although if both parties so desired it could be solved to their mutual satisfaction.

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The barring of the communists from the Junta de Liberacion seems to have resulted not only from the distrust aroused by the opportunism of the slogans and past activity of the Party (with its organs of espionage and secret police, its direct interference in the activities of the Republican government) in the minds of the component elements of the Junta. It also arose from precise information direct from the republican and socialist underground in Spain itself. Hardly had its exclusion become known when the Communist Party set in motion its characteristic intrigue, launching—in opposition to the Junta—an imaginary entity said to represent the true Spanish resistance.

In a previous phase of this intrigue the communists had supported the Socialist Party faction, which refused to adhere to the Junta in Mexico, with Dr. Negrin at its head, and which favored prolonging the legality of the last republican cabinet, headed by Negrin and supported in its final days chiefly by the communists. The defenders of this position argued that the Negrin government should be recognized by the Spanish people and by the United Nations as the only legitimate and constitutional government of Spain; this, five years after its disappearance from the national soil. Less pretentious, the members of the Junta in Mexico are not trying to form at the present moment a "republican government in exile," but a committee or Junta of liberation, thinking that what remains as a legitimate foundation, is not a government but a régime legally established in 1931 and violently suppressed *de facto,* although not *de jure,* by General Franco and his German and Italian allies. (The similar attempt to prolong indefinitely the validity of the parliamentary mandate which many members of the former Cortes maintain cannot be sustained juridically either.) It is a question of setting up the third republic, successor to the second, and not of artificially prolonging the past as if it were permanently present. Therefore the Junta in Mexico recognizes that the supreme decision should be made by the people as soon as they can freely vote a constituent Cortes. The invoking of the Constitutional Charter of 1931 has no more validity than the continuity of certain fundamental principles, and those only provisionally, until a new legality is established.

The initial solidarity of Dr. Negrin's group with the Communist Party soon broke up when the latter "invented" purely and simply the "Junta Suprema de Union Nacional" to rival the Junta de Liberacion created by the emigrés in Mexico. The said "Junta Suprema" was claimed to exist on Spanish soil, founded by an underground supported by the Communist Party united to all the republicans and socialists, and also by Catholics and monarchists, even former Falangists now opposed to the Franco régime. But no one in the Spanish underground had ever heard of such an organization and Dr. Negrin himself accused it of "lying" in his *Spanish Newsletter* from London last January 29, while the Basques also opposed the supposed participation of the Basque Nationalists in such a Junta, which they declared did not even exist.

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But the "Junta Suprema," even without existing, produced manifestos and won as adherents all the communist elements or sympathizers, who found in it a basis for intrigue and even declared that it was not necessary for such an organization to exist in order to win their support. It appeared upon investigation that the correspondent in Algiers of the Tass Agency had been the one to give to the world the first news of this non-existent instrument of intrigue, and that the first manifesto had been manufactured outside Spain by the Communist Party when it found itself excluded from all participation in the Junta de Liberacion. The smooth terminology of this manifesto, whose first concern is freedom of propaganda for the monarchists, and which would be satisfied with the elimination of the Falange from the Army and from the administration of the State, is a clear indication of the ability of its formulators to attract those elements which the Spanish underground had rejected for having aspirations contrary to that of establishing a democracy.

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Incomplete as its representation is, the Junta Espanola de Liberacion is today the Spanish republican emigré organization with the greatest authority; it serves as spokesman for their fundamental aspirations. It is clear that the future of a country does not depend—neither in this case nor in others—upon its emigrés, except in part. And the majority of the Spanish people have suffered in the years since 1936 the physical and moral tortures of imprisonment, the sorrow of a sacrifice of loved ones and friends in a holocaust of fratricidal hatred. To all rightfully belong the effort and the responsibility—and the glory as well—of bringing about the moral and material reconstruction of a nation ruined by the Civil War and its frightful aftermath.

That means that only through civil concord will the deep-seated enmity which has torn asunder the two halves of a common fatherland be one day overcome and blotted out. The spirit of concord does not mean, however, impunity for crimes which have been committed. Nor should the just punishment required be strained by an outburst of revenge, either. A development bristling with difficulties and dangers is near at hand, that of the liquidation of the present state of affairs in Spain. The most imprudent thing of all would be to trust to sheer force or to intrigue in the effort to turn aside an historical process which itself is inexorable. But after the present chaos, a new and more just order must be established. That its acceptance may be possible for the great majority of the people, they must participate directly in its creation and, before long, in its consolidation. And in order to achieve such a result, there is no other way than that of a democratic exercise of liberty. To make this possible and accept it calmly will be the primary duty of the Spanish people. Not to oppose it is the fundamental guarantee which Spain will claim of the other nations and their governments.

Communications

A NOTE ON SINARQUISM

Des Moines, Ia.

TO the Editors: I have read "A Note on Mexican Sinarquism" with great interest. Since my name is mentioned as an "admirer" of Sinarquism, I may be permitted to state my personal reactions on the subject.

I do not doubt the intelligence, sincerity, honesty or Catholicity of Mr. Skillin or THE COMMONWEAL. I admit that I might be wrong in my "admiration" of Sinarquism. This (thank God) would not be the first time I have been wrong in my life, and I pray to be wrong again (not too often).

I have read more anti-Sinarquist than pro-Sinarquist material in the American press. I journeyed to Mexico two years ago with a definite prejudice against Sinarquism. Having met Sinarquist leaders, having attended some of their meetings, and having read their literature, I am impressed by their sincerity, Catholicity, honesty and intelligence. I presume I am somewhat gullible in my travels, but I certainly tried my best to be alert, judicious and critical.

I do rely upon the opinion of the Mexican hierarchy and priesthood. They are the sons, brothers and the spiritual fathers of martyrs. They are just out of the catacombs. (It is easy enough to pass a snap judgment on their opinion from a soft chair in an American parlor.) An American bishop and I called on sixteen Mexican bishops and many priests. To each of them the question was put: "What about the Sinarquistas?" The uniform, universal reply was: "They are good Catholics; they are not fascists or nazis. They are not dangerous to Mexico. They are not undemocratic." If I had not been able to learn anything else about the Sinarquistas, I must admit that the assurance of these bishops and priests would be sufficient for me. These men know and love Mexico: they have suffered too much to take any chances. Who am I to dispute their testimony?

Their replies did not "canonize" Sinarquism for me, nor did they make it a Catholic movement, but they did furnish some assurance to a doubting Thomas like me. The argument from authority and personalities is generally considered weak dialectics. Hence, my premises in favor of Sinarquism are weak, but they are of no mean value.

We must, however, examine the various propositions and conclusions found in Mr. Skillin's statement, and judge them by the laws of evidence and logic.

We can dismiss the *"a pari"* argument taken from Franco or Mussolini, Salazar or Austria. At their worst, comparisons are lame. At their best they do not prove anything.

Inaccuracies or falsehoods do not tend to strengthen

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the general contention. There is at least one falsehood in Mr. Skillin's article. It concerns the personality of the founder José Antonio "de" (sic) Urquiza. Mr. Skillin says that José Antonio served in Franco's army. I have a telegram from his father, Manuel Urquiza, dated Queretaro, Qr., Mexico, March 18, 1944, which says: "My son José Antonio never served in Franco's army." I believe Don Manuel. Mr. Skillin has brought false witness against a dead man who cannot defend himself. Mr. Skillin is Christian enough to acknowledge his error. I am sure it was not malicious, but such a statement did serve to discredit my "glowing tribute" to a saintly young man.

Some inaccuracies reveal vincible ignorance as, for instance, "One clue seems to lie in the fact that the movement is an answer to the definitely anti-Christian aspects of the Mexican Revolution, *which began in* 1910 with the downfall of Porfirio Diaz."

The Constitution of 1857 was far from being Christian and the Laws of Reform since 1822 have put into effect pillage, confiscation and suppression of Catholicism. All these antedate the passing of Porfirio Diaz by almost one hundred years. Mr. Skillin can find a good, reliable and "unimpeachable" summary of these laws in Volume X of the Catholic Encyclopedia, and a mere "tourist" visit to Mexico will reveal that the building of churches ceased almost a century ago. The ruins of Mexico's Christian culture date back to the middle of the last century. Most college, university and school buildings were transferred from Catholic Church ownership to the State long before 1910.

May I point to another inaccuracy? Where did Mr. Skillin learn of the existence of a *National Catholic Party?* Such a thing does *not* exist.

When Mr. Skillin says: "These examples are enough to indicate why Mexican Catholics still oppose the *Revolution,*" we must ask *which* revolution. One gets lost counting Mexican revolutions. Mexican Catholics are not Rexists or Maximilianists. They want and love the Mexican Republic, but they do hope, pray and work, and are willing to die, for a *real democracy*. They tell us that they have never enjoyed the privilege of a democracy in Mexico—and they are telling the truth!

In the *Nation,* May 27, 1944, we find this statement: "Curious things have been exported from Mexico in the last years. In 1943, for instance, rosaries were shipped to the value of 2,000,000 pesos, and great quantities of religious ornaments as well. *That shows how active the Catholic church has become in recent years.*" Apparently the writer desires to fool the reader into a conclusion which does not follow from the premise. Certainly the "influence" of the Church is not shown by the export of rosaries!

Mr. Skillin uses a similar trick: "According to the 'Handbook for Chiefs' (1941) Sinarquistas are forbidden to bear arms when attending meetings. If they are found with a knife in their possession, they are subject to suspension for a month, while detection of a gun is supposed to bring indefinite suspension. But this same pamphlet emphasizes the number of 'martyrs' who have died for the cause." Are we to infer that these "martyrs" carried

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knives and guns? It seems Mr. Skillin and Mr. Del Vayo use the same rhetorical device to effect a certain impression upon the reader without being accused of faulty reasoning.

Putting aside falsehoods, inaccuracies and "trick" logic, one can divide the remaining parts of Mr. Skillin's argument into three sections.

(1) The portion which describes Sinarquism: its aims and purposes as found in its official programs in Spanish and in the American publications by Father Heibel,O.S.B., Mr. White, Mr. McNeill, and a few others.

I visited Mexico and received similar information from the Sinarquistas themselves and from impartial sources. I received no other information than such as would cause me to admire Sinarquism, although I contacted many personages—Catholic and non-Catholic, official and non-official, rich and poor—all over Mexico. But, again, these are only arguments from authority and personalities. *What is truth, and where shall we find it?*

(2) The portion which quotes and draws conclusions from the pamphlet "Mexico in 1960." I must admit that the booklet referred to has not been read by me. I would, however, ask: Is it an official publication? Who is the author? What is its authority? An old teacher of mine taught me to ask the following questions: (a) What did he say? (b) Did he really say it? (c) What did he mean? How about applying these tests to Mr. Skillin's statement about Sinarquism? We need not mention that context quoting is a necessity. Too often Mr. Skillin forgets it.

Let it be understood that I do not propose to defend Sinarquism if it is *de facto* all that Mr. Skillin claims it is. I do question Mr. Skillin's sources, and I reject most of his unfavorable conclusions, because I do not find them to stand the test of sound logic.

(3) The portion which Mr. Skillin calls "unimpeachable evidence" is apparently made up by repeating information reproduced without credit from the *Nation,* the *New Republic,* the *Inter-American* and other magazines or newspapers which are manifestly drawing from some common source. The original source, its veracity, its motives, should concern Mr. Skillin in his editorial capacity. He may find that he has been using a "weak" argument from authority without checking up on the authority!

For example, it should be Mr. Skillin's duty to verify the statement concerning the "canonization" by the Sinarquistas of de la Lama, who attempted to assassinate President Avila Camacho. The stupidity or maliciousness of that report is so evident when one is but slightly acquainted with Avila Camacho's refusal to disband the Sinarquistas and of his actual friendly attitude towards many of their leaders. How could the Sinarquistas even think of murdering their friend?

In the passage concerning the attempted assassination, there is a *trickiness* in writing and quoting which may fool the reader. To which of the three explanations does Mr. Skillin expect us to give credence? The one between parentheses is the truest in our opinion. The first and longest is the most harmful to the Sinarquistas reputation. The second contradicts the first. Is it impressions or information Mr. Skillin is giving the readers? Mr. Skillin should give us the real "dope" from "unimpeachable evidence." Why leave us up in the air when *"you've got the stuff"!*

One regrets to see Mr. Skillin attempt to expose the *double-trick* play, "do-it-first because the others are planning to do it." That ill-famed calumniator, Don Newton, and a few other writer on Sinarquism have repeated *ad nauseam* what we find in Mr. Skillin's article. It sums up to this: "The Sinarquistas exploit the fear of Communism while they themselves plot to do the very thing they accuse Communism of attempting." That is an old trick. Gelon, erstwhile of Syracuse, used the device about 500 B.C.

In the June 9, 1944, issue of the *United States News,* we find the statement: "Constantine Oumansky, Russian Ambassador to Mexico, is following such an aggressive policy in building Russian ties in that country and in spreading Russian influence through Latin America that this Government is becoming somewhat interested. Mr. Oumansky, when Ambassador to this country, followed a very aggressive line." If David Lawrence knows whereof he speaks, can you blame the Sinarquistas for their fears?

The most serious accusation is that of secrecy. There is secrecy and secrecy. Some is theologically allowable, advisable and necessary. Some is not necessary; some imprudent; some positively sinful. Would these fervent Catholics justify, sponsor or maintain a sinful secrecy? I know the leaders, and my answer is "No." Would the Mexican bishops allow an organization 3,000,000 (?) strong, made up exclusively of Catholics, to assert *"the chief is put in office by God,"* or to *"require blind obedience on the part of its members"?* If they have permitted such a situation to exist, either the Mexican hierarchy is not faithful to its apostolic trust or it is abysmally careless and ignorant. I refuse to admit either possibility.

The statement about "green shirts, salutes, banners, etc." intended to give the impression that such are signs of fascism are a trite repetition, but they become more ridiculous the more they are repeated. Have you ever seen a St. Pat's Day Parade up Fifth Avenue, Mr. Skillin? And what of the Shriners or the K. of C.'s?

Since you have given me the privilege of a rejoinder, this is my first request. I want facts and not insinuations. I want page and chapter. I want documentary evidence. I want "stuff" that will stand scrutiny. Give me that, and I'll stop "admiring" the Sinarquistas. If you or the *Nation* or the *New Republic* or Department of State can hand out "real evidence," let it come forth, let it be published. Most of us are not only "democratic at heart" as you so flatteringly call us; we want to be "democratic *de facto";* yes, even champions of real democracy. But, we do not want to be victims of name-calling or of mere verbiage. If we are in error, it's an honor and a duty and not a shame to admit it.

More than just a superficial knowledge of Mexican history and mentality is needed to judge Mexican ideological, political or social movements. Most of us Americans err by judging the rest of the world according to an American pattern of thinking and acting. Only to mention a few things about Mexico: elections, political parties, labor

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unions, have not the same or even the slightest resemblance to our American terms. It is evident that Mr. Skillin does not realize this.

There is a further positive duty, Mr. Skillin, which rests with you. How would you suggest securing the Four Freedoms for Mexico? To you, the sincerity and zeal of the leaders are not enough. Could you be a little more explicit in your requirements?

What can we Catholics do in the United States to help our brother Catholics in Mexico? Can we, by friendly understanding, by sympathy, by patient and constant teaching, change these "terrible" Sinarquistas into democracy-loving groups, into adopting the imperfect but sure ways of success in the political field?

The National Catholic Rural Life Conference is going to bring up a group of young Mexican farmers, not to attend American Colleges of Agriculture, but to become farm apprentices *on* American farms. That will be our positive contribution to the good neighbor policy. I believe firmly as you in the fundamental tenets of democracy. "Democracy consists more in the spirit under which a society is organized than in the specific political forms of that scoiety. It must include the attribution of absolute value to every human person; it must exclude the forcing of consciences; it must provide for free political criticism and for free association of citizens in economic and political action." What objections would Mexican Sinarquistas have to such philosophy? Perhaps we might hear from them.

RIGHT REVEREND LUIGI LIGUTTI.

IN REPLY

IF ANYONE had told me a year ago that I should find myself engaged even in amiable controversy of any scope with Monsignor Ligutti, I should not have believed him. Were he criticizing anything I have had to say about soil building, credit unions, family farms, productive homes and consumers' cooperatives, I should tend to retire from the field as rapidly and as gracefully as possible. But in this case I must stand my ground; I cannot overlook the first-hand evidence I have seen.

Which of us is the more in the right in the present case must be decided on the basis of facts. And while it now appears—due to the necessarily private and confidential sources of much of my information on Sinarquism—that a very few minor details in the article were not letter perfect in accuracy, nothing has been offered in criticism that shakes my conviction that "A Note on Sinarqiusm" is a substantially accurate picture of that movement. Let us examine Monsignor Ligutti's charges in detail.

Here is fact number one. Monsignor Ligutti—who with certain other North American apologists for Mexican Sinarquism seems to have an obsession on the subject—accuses me of reproducing material "without credit from the *Nation,* the *New Republic,* the *Inter-American* and other magazines or newspapers . . ." Actually I have not even read the articles on Sinarquism in the *Nation* or the *New Republic.* I read the *Inter-American* article rather hurriedly several months ago; it made little impression on me and I have not seen it since.

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"A Note on Sinarquism" made it plain at the very outset that it was based in part on private sources, and had to be for many reasons, notably the lack of information about Mexico in our daily press and the secret character of the organization itself. With a secret organization and a revolutionary government involved, it should be obvious that confidential sources of information cannot be divulged. I ask Monsignor Ligutti and other critics to take my word for it that our sources of information are as little biased as we could find.

One point in the article which has been questioned most sharply was the three versions of the Sinarquist connection with the attempted assassination of President Camacho. It has since been confirmed from Catholic sources that all three reports have validity. The attempt, as we stated, was the result of a personal grievance against the President and his régime. And the statement that Sinarquist chiefs met in secret session is reinforced by direct, personal and first-hand testimony, as is our account of their passing the resolution quoted in the article. Finally, *El Sinarquista* did in fact disclaim the attempt and charged that it was a first step in the communist revolution—it would have been far too dangerous in revolutionary Mexico for Sinarquists openly to manifest any interest in such an attempt.

But the greater part of evidence adduced in the article is directly from official Sinarquist sources: the weekly, *El Sinarquista;* the monthly *Orden,* and such Sinarquist pamphlets—which are printed without naming the author, Monsignor Ligutti—as the "Handbook for Chiefs" and "Mexico in 1960." Since it happens that I understand Spanish, I read these documents in their original text. And I can assure Monsignor Ligutti that I did not quote out of context. What I still want to know after all this discussion is how anyone can square the Sinarquist statements quoted in the article with the claim so often repeated by the movement's apologists that Sinarquism is in any sense "democratic."

The June number of *Orden,* for example, boasts of the fact that since 1940 "the National Sinarquist Union . . . has not once participated in political elections." At the same time it speaks with pride of the fear the movement has aroused "that the people will take into their own hands the destiny of Mexico." Again, "the struggle cannot fail and blood and suffering will bring us victory." Finally, the same issue, which signalizes the seventh birthday of the movement, says that today Sinarquism "presents itself in the political picture in Mexico as an organization which is mature, alert and more powerful than ever." The Sinarquists openly aspire to taking over in Mexico; yet they refuse normal political means. Is it illogical to conclude that they are waiting only until they are powerful enough to seize the reins of government? Can any organization which at its meetings does not permit discussions, but only hands out orders, be held democratic? How can there be adequate checks and balances, or influence on the part of the rank and file, in an organization rigidly controlled by a secret leadership? The term "democratic" as applied to such an organization is devoid of any meaning.

And now to a minor point. Inspired perhaps by the color of the Sinarquists' official shirt, Monsignor Ligutti asks me whether I have never heard of a Saint Patrick's Day parade? He goes so far (I don't know on what grounds) as to intimate that similarity proves nothing. But since he likens the Sinarquists to Shriners and the Friendly Sons, I should like to ask him a question. And I would ask it of any fair-minded person. Do the shirts, insignia, salutes, songs and banners of Sinarquist demonstrations—and the oratory of their publicly known leaders—remind one of a Saint Patrick's Day parade or of certain European demonstrations put on by Spanish Falangists or Italian Blackshirts? My remarks about Sinarquist knives and guns and martyrs may well have been too cryptic. But the point of it was that the repetition of such terms as blood, struggle, martyrdom, destiny, in a country like Mexico, is itself an incitement to violence.

Thus far we have been unable to secure additional documentation to substantiate the report that Jose Antonio actually fought beside Franco. To have said so originally was in no sense an effort to detract from the personal integrity of the movement's murdered founder—there were many on both sides of the Spanish battle lines who entered into that struggle with all the fervor and self-abnegation of which they were capable; many on each side believed it to be a holy crusade. The purpose of linking Jose Antonio with the Spanish Civil War was to explain certain similarities between Sinarquism and the Falange. On the basis of the information so far available, it looks as if I were mistaken on this detail about Jose Antonio and I regret the error. The "National Catholic Party" is a loose translation of "Accion Nacional." I know there have been Mexican revolutions before 1910, but the Church in Mexico was in a rather favored position during the long-lived Diaz régime.

Monsignor Ligutti, I readily admit a few minor inaccuracies in my article. They do not affect my basic contention. The structure, secrecy, methods, propaganda and aims of the Sinarquists—whatever their provocation—run counter both to the outward form and inner spirit of democracy.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN, JR.

The Screen

The Voice, Hair, $64 Question

YOU MAY have seen "Room Service" on the stage when George Abbott's production was whooping it up, or in the first film version through which the Marx Brothers tore like mad. In any case you can see it again now if you're so inclined. The new version, appropriately called *"Step Lively,"* is a musical film starring The Voice, and has the same old plot about the shoestring theatrical troupe whose impositions and growing bills are frankly driving the hotel manager and the harassed auditor nuts. There's a great deal of horseplay and rushing in and out; one half of the cast spends most of its energies trying to fool the other half, which is in turn trying to put something over on the first half. All this somehow fits into a giddy musical comedy; Tim Whelan has directed the

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action with speed so that you'll never give it a second thought. It is in the musical production numbers that the film lags. Most of these are done in a style left over from the twenties. However, Frank Sinatra, in the rôle of the naïve playwright who comes to New York to demand that the theatrical producer (George Murphy) return his play and his $1,500, does his songs in a fashion that is guaranteed to make his fans swoon—especially when The Voice croons "Where Does Love Begin" and "As Long As There's Music." Gloria De Haven proves an attractive love interest, but Frankie has to take a lot of mauling from Anne Jeffreys before he gets to the girl of his heart. Adolphe Menjou, Walter Slezak and Eugene Pallette are effective contributors in this large cast specializing in frenetic fun. Mr. Sinatra's emaciated appearance fits the requirements of the rôle; he looks every bit as sick as he's supposed to in the scene in which he pretends to take poison. I really preferred the Bing-Crosby-like naturalness which Sinatra assumed in "Higher and Higher" to his pretensions at acting in this new picture. However we are not expected to take Frankie too seriously. When he makes his first appearance, Murphy inquires if he's had his dinner, and then quickly adds: "No, I can see you haven't." And later, when Frank asks, "How do I look?" George replies: "You couldn't feel that bad."

Red Skelton also comes in for some kidding in the brightly technicolored musical known as *"Bathing Beauty."* Esther Williams even refers to him as a red-headed bluebeard when a fake wife interrupts their wedding. But Red can take it as well as dish it out and he does a great deal of kidding during the course of the film. The picture's title is really a misnomer, for while the movie opens and closes with deliciously cooling swimming sequences (especially the finale, which is a big—and I mean big—water ballet dripping with beautiful girls swimming in tricky formations), it is mainly concerned with Red's arduous pursuit of Miss Williams who left him at the altar. He even enrolls in the girls' school where she teaches, and, needless to say, the Red Head runs riot with this campus of beauties that is like none you or I ever saw. The story becomes somewhat labored at times, and George Sidney's direction is by no means sprightly; but the picture's dull stretches are pepped up by the musical numbers of two outstanding bands, led respectively by Xavier Cugat and Harry James. The beauteous swimmer, Esther Williams, proves that she can handle herself before a camera as well as in a pool. The film's high spots belong to Skelton; and vaudeville fans will rejoice when he does his famous imitation of a girl rising and dressing in the morning. Even funnier is Red's skilful impersonation of a ballerina in the hilarious dancing-class sequence.

Phil Baker makes no pretense at hogging the whole show in *"Take It Or Leave It."* The movie, of course, is built around his radio program, and while most of it is pretty static as a motion picture, it does have its humorous moments and one very novel idea that should provide a lot of fun for audiences who know their movies. The slim plot (perhaps the slimmest that ever turned up in a film) concerns a sailor (Edward Ryan—whom you last saw as the youngest of the Sullivan boys) and his wife (pretty newcomer Marjorie Massow) who is going to have a baby any minute. The sailor is very worried because he hasn't the slightest idea where he's going to get the money to pay the expensive obstetrician his wife fancies. The dumbest dolt in the audience will be able to guess how the sailor gets his money as soon as he's seen going up on the stage to try his luck in Mr. Baker's quiz contest. But the film's novelty comes when the sailor chooses as his subject: Scenes from motion picture hits of the past; and you in the audience are given a chance to guess too, for Phil Baker doesn't ask his question until after the sequences from the old films are run off. These include Shirley Temple doing a song and dance number from one of her first movies, Jack Oakie singing "Goodbye Broadway, Hello France," and a long line of Twentieth Century Fox stars doing their stuff through the years. Phil Silvers says in the film's prologue that there are 27 of these stars in the picture. I didn't count 'em, but you'll find Betty Grable, Alice Faye, Sonja Henie, Al Jolson, George Montgomery and such brother combinations as Nicholas, Wiere and Ritz. Mr. Baker becomes very generous with the money furnished by his sponsor (not mentioned) when he allows the sailor to win not only one but a whole series of $64 questions. In the

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meantime you get to see some good production numbers. The scheme gets a bit tiresome as the sailor's winnings run into the hundreds, but none of the old sequences is hard to take. It might have been fun if Producer Bryan Foy had included a couple of dramatic scenes instead of so many musical items—but perhaps that will be done in a sequel, that is if audiences take "Take It Or Leave It" instead of leaving it. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

The Time For Decision. Sumner Welles. Harper. $3.00.

THIS BOOK is well written by a man who speaks modestly but with authority out of his long diplomatic experience. It deals with events and plans of enormous importance, and some of its history, while not sensationally new, is absorbingly interesting. It contains much wisdom and ends with a plan for regional world organization which structurally deserves to rank with two or three of the best which have been proposed. Yet I put the book down with a profound sense of disappointment and apprehension that in so far as it has influence it will affect the peace for the worse rather than the better. The reason why will appear in the course of this review, which necessarily will have to deal with the high spots of a book crammed with statements which invite comment.

Mr. Welles makes his own positive suggestions on the basis of his interpretation of world history from the beginning of the First World War until now. I think that he seeks a fairness and proportion in that history which he does not achieve. His principal contribution to it is his account of his own mission to Europe in 1940, when, as the President's personal representative, he talked with Mussolini and Hitler and their principal associates in an effort to ascertain what if any were the chances for peace, and what if anything the President might do at a time when public opinion in America would not support any direct intervention in the war. Mr. Welles's interesting but discreet story confirms the usual view of the principal Axis leaders—except that Ciano comes off rather better in the Welles narrative than one would expect. On me this part of Mr. Welles' story had a rather curious effect. I was impressed that in these private talks the Axis leaders felt compelled to pay as much lip-service as they did to condemnation not only of war but of vast armaments, and I could see how Hitler's line of argument would carry conviction to Germans living under censorship, who were neither devils nor fanatical partisans of the right of the master race to rule the world at no matter what cost of blood and tears.

In general, Mr. Welles follows the now orthodox interpretations of the events which led us into the Second World War. He admits some faults in the Peace of Versailles, but presents the Second World War as the product of long standing Pan-Germanic intrigue which, after Hitler's rise to power, was outwardly directed by political gangsters, with the German General Staff as the permanent source of power. The principal weaknesses of the Allies of 1914 were their divisions, their lack of firmness toward Germany and America's failure to join the League.

The book has one hero. I hasten to add that he is not the author, whose book is in no sense an *apologia pro vita sua* nor an attack on his own enemies. There is precisely one reference to Secretary Hull in the index. The hero, at least up to the time of the Moscow conference, is Franklin Delano Roosevelt. About him Mr. Welles tells little that is new but he makes a good case for his handling of relations with Vichy.

If Roosevelt in the period under review ever made a mistake, it was due to the necessity he was under of conciliating American opinion, and later his Allies. In this conection Mr. Welles (or is it merely a typographical error?) gives the date 1934 to the President's Chautauqua speech, which later became a kind of Bible for non-interventionists. Actually it was delivered during the Presidential campaign of 1936, by which time, according to the Welles theory, it was far less excusable, even as a concession to American public opinion, than at the earlier date.

When he looks to the future, Mr. Welles renews his familiar opposition to a peace based almost exclusively on a triple alliance of the Big Three. He speaks out effectively concerning the dangers of holding the peoples of "Asia, the Near East and Africa" indefinitely under any imperial yoke. As I have already said, his proposals concerning regional and world organization are very suggestive. And often he is an excellent antidote to Walter Lippmann.

But these virtues are offset by certain errors. The most immediately serious of which is his proposal to end the "German menace" by dividing the Germany of 1938 into three separate states. He also proposes an elaborate exchange of populations. The Poles are to be moved out of Eastern Poland which should go to Russia, and the Germans out of East Prussia which should go to Poland. His new eastern German state should, however, get a small slice of the old Polish Corridor—but not Danzig.

What is wrong with this? In the first place, on the basis of Mr. Welles's own statement about imperialism, it is a very bad approach to the problem of peace to single out for separate discussion as a "menace" only the German problem. He is far gentler in dealing with the "Japanese threat," concerning which he makes more reasonable proposals. (Incidentally he divorces himself from personal responsibility for the diplomacy which preceded Pearl Harbor, and one gathers that he would not contradict Churchill's statement to the House of Commons six weeks after Pearl Harbor that Roosevelt had led him to believe that the United States would enter the war against Japan even if not attacked. This phase of the Japanese question is one of several specific subjects on which Mr. Welles sheds no direct light.)

Every day makes me surer that the outstanding menace to future peace will not come from German ambitions but from the general perpetuation of competitive nationalism and imperialism. The German birth rate and the extraordinary German losses in this war will make it extraordinarily difficult to challenge the rising might of the USSR, with its greater natural resources, its far higher birth rate, and its support by most of the Slavs and all the communists of Europe.

In so far as German discontent may contribute to a new war, nothing will make that more likely than Mr. Welles's plan. He is candid enough to admit the rather obvious objections to it, but believes that they are outweighed by the fact that only so can the German General Staff be destroyed. To it, even after Germany's complete defeat and disarmament, he attributes a power of dangerous intrigue in other countries for which he gives neither logical nor historical justification. Indeed such

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plots as he fears could only be successful if non-Germanic Europe has an incapacity for recovery which makes its case well nigh hopeless. If Mr. Welles had had the personal experience of completely moral communist intrigue that I have had as a socialist he would see in communism, still completely controlled by Stalin, a far graver potential threat to the peace and harmony of Europe, than anything that can be done by a defeated and hated German General Staff.

It is surprising to see how far Mr. Welles goes as the apologist for Stalinist diplomacy. I think that there is ground for hope that in the interest of his own country Stalin can be persuaded to a reasonable and fairly cooperative post-war policy. It cannot be done by blind appeasement, or by interpreting Russia's foreign policy in terms of Litvinov's speeches while calmly ignoring Stalin's sale of oil to Mussolini all during the Ethiopian affair, his assurance to Hitler on their joint occupation of Poland that "our friendship is cemented in blood," and his insistence on his right unilaterally to settle his relations with his neighbors, regardless of the Atlantic Charter and Litvinov's own treaties of non-aggresion with them.

Mr. Welles's opinion of the nature of the German "menace" in part derives from his highly selective history of the years between two wars, his too sweeping condemnation of German liberalism, his failure to recognize how much Hitler's rise to power was due to the help of foreign diplomacy and of foreign as well as domestic capitalism, and in general from his inadequate appreciation of economic factors in breeding war.

This last failure is perhaps his greatest error. When he refers to economic matters it is merely in support of free or comparatively free trade between nations. I have been an opponent all my political life of the drive for ever higher tariffs. I have supported reciprocal trade agreements. But at this point Mr. Welles merely adds his voice to a chorus that alarms me. The post-war world cannot and will not have genuine free trade, and loose talking on this subject is playing into the hands of those who, under the guise of free trade, will not so much open up the markets of their own countries as insist on exploiting the natural resources of weaker peoples. The whole emphasis on American recovery of prosperity through foreign trade is not only misleading but likely to play into the hands of the imperialists. And that is a menace that Mr. Welles ignores along with other economic problems of poverty and unemployment in relation to militarism and war.

This review, inadequate as it is to all the controversial issues Mr. Welles raises, already exceeds the usual limit. Mr. Welles's book is worth space because its merits will recommend to many readers proposals which will doom the peace he seeks.

If space permitted I should argue earnestly that he who sees so clearly from history and logic the weakness of alliances ought also for similiar reasons to understand how completely unlikely it will be that sovereign powers, the Big Three in particular, will keep their own armaments and yet consent to their effective limitation, control or use against "an aggressor" by an international authority. Whatever one thinks about an international police force, it ought to be clear that nothing worthy of that name will or can be created in a world which does not move very rapidly to complete disarmament of individual nations—except for such forces as may be necessary to preserve internal order. The perpetuation after this war of universal military conscription and aggressive armament

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in all or most of the victor nations will be the obvious proof that the peace has been lost. If it is unrealistic to believe that nations will keep the present political-economic system and disarm, it is even more unrealistic to believe that, while keeping that system, and with it competitive armaments, they will accept Mr. Welles's scheme of control in good faith.

Reading Mr. Welles's book added to my growing conviction that we shall never get peace or harness our technological equipment to the destruction of poverty until we have a faith in the possibility of great ideas and their capacity to conquer the hearts even of the peoples we now call our enemies. No people as a people is bad enough for the fate Mr. Welles would bring upon the Germans, and no people, not even of the Big Three nations, could they be assured indefinitely of the leadership of Mr. Welles's hero, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, along with Churchill and Stalin, can or will successfully play the rôle of God of wrath modified by the formulae of this book. Mutual forgiveness is a requisite of statesmanship.

NORMAN THOMAS.

Good-bye, Mr. Chippendale. T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings. With Drawings by Mary Petty. Knopf. $2.00.

NEW ENGLAND, perhaps, first contributed the picture of the reformer as a hairy old misfit, unattractive in both mind and body. But now from old England comes T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings, a merry pamphleteer who, in "Good-bye, Mr. Chippendale," would laugh sentimental Americans out of their affection for antique furniture. Yet this smiling reformer is not light-minded, nor is he superficial; on the contrary, his quips issue from an understanding grounded both in research and purpose. His is a book which convinces as it sparkles.

He first notes that while architectural magazines await a great post-war building-boom in America, there will be no furniture *of today* to fill these structures. And big-browed magazines are not even reaching the public to guide it. Meantime, since 1910, Americans have poured out over one billion dollars for Chippendales from England, for Louis Quinze from France and for guaranteed old Delft tiles from Holland. The cult for these wares, contends our cheerful sermonizer, originated with Elsie de Wolfe, who popularized such furnishings by her interior decorating and cuckoo propaganda of a generation ago. He holds that she did for the inside of the house what Lord Duveen, descendant of a Dutch lard merchant, did for the pictures-galleries of many a gullible millionaire. As a result of such pressures, milady eventually phoned the druggist in a gilded sedan-chair. How to correct this *nouveau-riche* taste?

In part, Mr. Robsjohn-Gibbings believes that excess has brought about an incomplete reaction. The Lord of San Simeon's auction of old armor and oaken chests at Gimbel's has already prepared the way for the consignment of such valuables to Macy's Basement. That will be the nadir for the Fifty-Seventh Street decorators who still insist on the past. But the lively preacher is less precise when it comes to practical corrections. He suggests reading of architectural publications. He proposes an increased respect for air, light and space. Such proposals may not reach the Grand Rapids manufacturers, who have reflected the chi-chi taste of the *raffiné* designers. Nor will such suggestions necessarily illuminate those periodicals specializing in fashion hints to women. Nevertheless, "Good-bye, Mr. Chippendale" by its salty directness has already punc-

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tured a fallacy too long unquestioned. It is to be hoped that its author will persist until a truly contemporary furniture can stand alongside the best of our architecture by Frank Lloyd Wright, or such projects as the TVA dam. If so, he would be one of those rare reformers who actually liberate. JEROME MELLQUIST.

The Captain's Wife. Eiluned Lewis. Macmillan. $2.00.

THIS is a very different Wales from Llewellyn's "How Green Is My Valley." Saint Idris is a snug little port on the coast built round a Norman cathedral and the ruins of the bishop's palace; a town of seafaring men and a countryside of small farmers. The Captain and his wife live opposite the stone market cross and for a couple of years their door is opened to us while the Captain is home on leave or off on his faraway voyages. The time is 1880; the characters are surely the author's family and Lettice Peters is most likely her own mother.

It's a very charming small book, not much more than a first chapter or so for a novelist such as Llewellyn, but Lettice and her Captain live a romance which is embroidered by their four children and the alternate reunions and partings must strike an echo nowadays in the hearts of so many waiting wives that Lettice may prove to be the very friend they need. One can't help loving Lettice or being delighted whenever she gets a new bonnet. There is only one point on which we challenge her practical sense when she tucks the Captain's favorite lozenges in the pockets of all his jackets in his sea chest. Fancy putting your hand in a pocket at Port Said and encountering a molten mass of sticky peppermint!

The people about Saint Idris are also pleasant to meet as acquaintances. The sea seems to have tempered the sternness of their religion, and Miss Lewis says they have a faith as native as their lilac rocks which were taken as sacred stones to Stonehenge. "The land has outlived many convulsions of men's history and still each year the wild flowers return to the sheltered banks of the lanes and the children of the new generation smell the heady wine of the flowering gorse as they run joyfully to the sea." I know I will keep on lending "The Captain's Wife" to friends until it returns no more, and then I may even buy another copy. Can a reviewer make a more provocative statement? E. V. R. WYATT.

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THE ADDRESSES of the International Coop meeting last January stress the usefulness of revived European co-ops for distribution and rehabilitation. This is an important point. Less convincing is the assertion—without indicating how—that co-ops will succeed where capitalism and state economy have failed: in producing a stable economy of abundance.

CONTRIBUTORS

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E. V. R. WYATT is the drama critic of the *Catholic World.*

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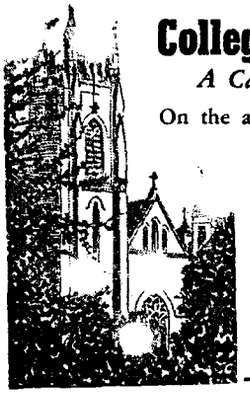

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